

Sir John Cockle at Court:

BEING THE
S E Q U E L
TO THE
KING AND THE MILLER.

By R. D O D S L E Y.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

The KING.
Sir JOHN COCKLE.
Sir TIMOTHY FLASH.
GREENWOOD.
BUCKRAM, a Taylor.

BARBER.
FRENCH COOK.
VINTNER.
JOE.
Three COURTIEERS.

W O M E N.

Mrs. KITTY.

Mrs. STARCH.

SCENE I.

Sir John, Taylor, Barber, and Joe.

Taylor. **T**IS the fashion, Sir, I assure you.
Sir John. Fashions are for fools; don't tell me of fashion. Must a man make an ass of himself, because it's the fashion?
Taylor. But you would be like other folks, Sir, you'd not you?
Sir John. No, Sir, if this is their likeness, I would not be like other folks. Why, a man might as well be cas'd up in armour; here's buckram and halibone enough to turn a bullet.
Joe. Sir, here's the barber has brought you home a new perriwig.
Sir John. Let him come in. Come, friend, let's see if you're as good at fashions as Mr. Buckram, here. What the devil's this?

Barber. The bag, Sir.
Sir John. The bag, Sir! And what's this bag for, Sir? This is not the fashion too, I hope.
Barber. It's what is very much wore, Sir, indeed.
Sir John. Wore, Sir! how is it wore? where is it wore? what is it for?
Barber. Sir, it is only for ornament.
Sir John. O, 'tis an ornament! I beg your pardon! Now, positively, I should not have taken this for an ornament. My poor grey hairs are, in my opinion, much more becoming. But, come, put it on. There, now, what do you think I am like?
Joe. I cod, measter, you're not like the same mon, I'm sure.
Barber. Sir, 'tis very genteel, I assure you.
Sir John. Genteel! ay, that it may be, for aught I know, but I'm sure 'tis very ugly.
Barber. They wear nothing else in France, Sir.

Sir John. In France, Sir! what's France to me? I'm an Englishman, Sir, and know no right the fools of France have to be my examples. Here, take it again; I'll have none of your new-fangled French fopperies: and if you please, I'll make you a present of this fine fashionable coat again. Fashion, indeed!

[*Exit Taylor, Barber, and Joe.*
Re-enter Joe with the French Cook.

Joe. Sir, here's a fine gentleman wants to speak with you.

Cook. Sir, me have hear dat your honour want one cook.

Sir John. Sir, you are very obliging; I suppose you would recommend one to me. But, as I don't know you—

Cook. No, no, Sir, me am one cook myself, and would be proud of de honour to serve you.

Sir John. You a cook! And, pray, what wages may you expect, to afford such finery as that?

Cook. Me will have one hundred guinea a year, no more; and two or three servant under me to do de work.

Sir John. Hum! very reasonable, truly! And, pray, what extraordinary matters can you do to deserve such wages?

Cook. O, me can make you one hundred dish de Englis know noting of; me can make you de portable soup to put in your pocket; me can dress you de fowl a-la Marli, en Galantine, a-la Montmorancy; de duck, en Grinadin; de chicken, a-la Chombre; de turkey, en Botine; de pidgeon, en Marlinton, a l'Italienne, a-la d'Haxelles: en fine, me can give you de essence of five or six ham, and de juice of ten or twelve stone of beef, all in de sauce of one littel dish.

Sir John. Very fine! At this rate no wonder the poor are starv'd, and the butcher unpaid. No, I will have no such cooks, I promise you; it is the luxury and extravagance introduc'd by such French kickshaw-mongers as you, that has devour'd and destroy'd old English hospitality. Go, go about your business; I have no mind to be beggar'd, nor to beggar honest tradesmen. Joe! [*Exit Cook.*

Joe. Sir.

Sir John. Let my daughter know the king has sent for me, and I am gone to court to wait on his Majesty.

Joe. Yes, Sir.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The King and several Courtiers.

King. Well, my lords, our old friend, the Miller of Mansfield, is arriv'd at last.

1st Court. He has been in town two or three days; has not your majesty seen him yet?

King. No, but I have sent for him to attend me this evening; and I design, with only you, my lords, who are now present, to entertain myself a while with his honest freedom. He will be here presently.

2^d Court. He must certainly divert your Majesty.

3^d Court. He may be diverting, perhaps; but if I may speak my mind freely, I think there is something too plain and rough in his behaviour for your majesty to bear.

King. Your lordship, perhaps, may be afraid of plain truth and sincerity, but I am not.

3^d Court. I beg your majesty's pardon; I did not suppose you was; I only think there is a certain awe and reverence due to your majesty, which I am afraid his want of politeness may make him transgress.

King. My lord, whilst I love my subjects, and preserve to them all their rights and liberties, I doubt not of meeting with a proper respect from the roughest of them: but as for the awe and reverence which your politeness would flatter me with, I love it not. I will, that all my subjects treat me with sincerity. An honest freedom of speech, as it is every honest man's right; so none can be afraid of it but he that is conscious to himself of ill-deservings. Sound maxims, and right conduct, can never be ridicul'd; and where the contrary prevail, the severest censure is the greatest kindness.

3^d Court. I believe your majesty is in the right, and I stand corrected.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. May it please your majesty, here is a person, who calls himself Sir John Cockle; the Miller of Mansfield, begs admittance to your majesty.

King. Conduct him in.

Enter Sir John.

King. Honest Sir John Cockle, you are welcome to London.

Sir John. I thank your majesty for the honour you do me, and am glad to find your majesty in good health.

King. But pray, Sir John, why in the habit of a miller yet? What I gave you, was with a design to set you above the mean dependence of a trade for subsistence.

Sir John. Your majesty will pardon my freedom. Whilst my trade will support me, I am independent; and I look upon that to be more honourable in an Englishman, than any dependence whatsoever. I am a plain, blunt man, and may possibly, some time or other, offend your majesty; and where, then, is my subsistence?

King. And dare you not trust the honour of a king?

Sir John. Without doubt I might trust your majesty very safely; but in general, though the honour of kings ought to be more sacred, the humour of kings is like that of other men; and when they please to change their mind, who shall dare to call their honour in question?

King. Sir John, you are in the right, and I am glad to see you maintain that noble freedom of spirit: I wish all my subjects were as independent of me as you resolve to be; I should then hear more truth and less flattery. But come, what news? How does my lady, and your son Richard?

Sir John. I thank your majesty, Margery is very well, and so is Dick.

King. I hope you have brought her up to town with you.

Sir John. She has displeas'd me of late very much.

King. In what?

Sir John. You shall hear. When I was only plain John Cockle, the Miller of Mansfield, your farmer's son in the neighbourhood made love to my daughter. He was a worthy, honest man. He lov'd my daughter sincerely, and, to all appearance her affections were plac'd on him. I approv'd of the match, and gave him my consent. But when your Majesty's bounty had rais'd my fortune and condition, my daughter Kate became Miss Kitty. She grew a fine girl, and was presently taken notice of by the young gentlemen of the country. Amongst the rest, Sir Timothy Flash, a young rakish, extravagant knight, made his addresses to her; his title, his dress, his equipage, dazzled her eyes and her understanding; and fond, I suppose

of being made a lady, she despises and forsakes her first lover, the honest farmer, and is determined to marry this mad, wrong-headed knight.

King. And is this the occasion of your displeasure? I should think you had rather cause to rejoice that she was so prudent. What! do you think it no advantage to your daughter, nor honour to yourself, to be ally'd to so great a man?

Sir John. It may be an honour to be ally'd to a great man, when a great man is a man of honour; but that is not always the case. Besides, nothing that is unjust, can be either prudent or honourable: And the breaking her faith and promise with a man that lov'd, and every way deserv'd her, merely for the sake of a little vanity, or self-interest, is an action that I am ashamed my daughter could be guilty of.

King. Why you are the most extraordinary man I ever knew: I have heard of fathers, quarrelling with their children for marrying foolishly for love; but you are so singular, as to blame yours for marrying wisely for interest.

Sir John. Why, I may differ a little from the common practice of my neighbours—but I hope your majesty does not, therefore, think me to blame.

King. No: Singularity in the right, is never a crime. If you are satisfied your actions are just, let the world blush that they are singular.

Sir John. Nay, and I am, perhaps, not so regardless of interest as your majesty may apprehend. It is very possible a knight, or even a lord, may be as good as well as a farmer. No offence, I hope.

[Turning to the Courtiers.]

Court. No, no, no.—Impertinent fellow. *[Aside.]*

King. Well, Sir John, I shall be glad to hear more of this affair another time; but tell me now how you like London. Your son Richard, I remember, gave a very satirical description of it; I hope you are better entertain'd.

Sir John. So well, that I assure your majesty, I am in admiration and wonder all day long.

King. Ay! Well, let us hear what it is you admire and wonder at.

Sir John. Almost every thing I see or hear of. When I see the splendor and magnificence in which some noblemen appear, I admire their riches; but when I hear of their debts, and their mortgages, I wonder at their folly. When I hear of a dinner costing an hundred pounds, I am surpris'd that one man should have so many friends to entertain; but when I am told, that it was made only for five or six squeamish lords, or piddling ladies, that eat not, perhaps, an ounce apiece, I am quite astonish'd. When I hear of an estate of twenty or thirty thousand a year, I envy the man that has it in his power to do so much good, and wonder how he disposes of it; but when I am told of the necessary expenses of a gentleman in horses and whores, and gaming and drinking, and dressing and gaming, I am surpris'd that the poor man is able to live. In short, when I consider our public credit, our honour, our courage, our freedom, our publick spirit, I am surpris'd, amaz'd, astonish'd, and confounded.

1st Court. Is not this bold, Sir?

Sir John. Perhaps it may; but I suppose his majesty would not have an Englishman a coward?

King. Far from it. Let the generous spirit of freedom reign uncheck'd: To speak his mind, is the undoubted right of every Briton; and be it the glory of my reign, that all my subjects enjoy that sacred liberty. 'Tis my wish to redress all grie-

vances; to right all wrongs: but kings, alas! are but fallible men; errors in government will happen, as well as failings in private life, and ought to be candidly imputed. And let me ask you one question, Sir John: Do you really think you could honestly withstand all the temptations that wealth and power would lay before you?

Sir John. I will not boast before your majesty; perhaps I could not. Yet give me leave to say, the man whom wealth or power can make a villain, is sure unworthy of possessing either.

King. Suppose self-interest, too, should clash with publick duty.

Sir John. Suppose it should: 'Tis always a man's duty to be just; and doubly his wish whom the publick trust their rights and liberties.

King. I think so; nay, he who cannot scorn the narrow interest of his own poor self, to serve his country, and defend her rights, deserves not the protection of a country to defend his own; at least, should not be trusted with the rights of other men.

Sir John. I wish no such were ever trusted.

King. I wish so too: But how are kings to know the hearts of men?

Sir John. 'Tis difficult, indeed; yet something might be done.

King. What?

Sir John. The man whom a king employs, or a nation trusts, should be thoroughly try'd. Examine his private character: mark how he lives; is he luxurious, or ambitious, or extravagant; avoid him: The soul of that man is mean; necessity will press him, and public fraud must pay his private debts. But if you find a man with a clear head, sound judgment, and a right honest heart, that is the man to serve both you and his country.

King. You're right; and such by me shall ever be distinguish'd. 'Tis both my duty and my interest to promote 'em. To such, if I give wealth, it will enrich the publick; to such, if I give power, the nation will be mighty; to such, if I give honour, I shall raise my own. But surely, Sir John, your's is not the language, nor the sentiments of a common miller; how, in a cottage, could you gain this superior wisdom?

Sir John. Wisdom is not confin'd to palaces; nor always to be bought with gold. I read often, and think sometimes; and he who does that, may gain some knowledge, even in a cottage. As for any thing superior, I pretend not to it. What I have said, I hope, is plain good sense; at least 'tis honest, and well meant.

King. Sir John, I think so; and, to convince you how much I esteem your plain dealing and sincerity of heart, receive this ring as a mark of my favour.

Sir John. I thank your majesty.

King. Don't thank me now; at present I have business that must be dispatch'd, and will desire you to leave me; before 'tis long I'll see you again.

Sir John. I wish your majesty a good night.

[Exit.]

King. Well, my lords, what do you think of this miller?

1st Court. He talks well; what he is in the bottom I don't know.

2d Court. I'm afraid not found.

3d Court. I fancy he's set on by somebody to impose upon your majesty with this fair shew of honesty.

1st Court. Or is not he some cunning knave, that wants to work himself into your majesty's favour?

King. I have a fancy come into my head to try him, which I'll communicate to you, and put in execution immediately. An hour hence, my lords, I shall expect to see you at Sir John's. [Exit.

SCENE III. A Tavern.

Sir Timothy Flash, the Landlord, and Greenwood.

Sir Tim. Honest Bacchus, how dost thou do?

Land. Sir, I am very glad to see you; pray, when did you come to town?

Sir Tim. Yesterday; and on an affair that I shall want a little of your assistance in.

Land. Any thing in my power, you know, you may command.

Sir Tim. You must know, then, I have an intrigue with a young lady that's just come to town with her father, and want an agreeable house to meet her at; can you recommend one to me?

Land. I can recommend you, Sir, to the most convenient woman in all London. What think you of Mrs. Wheedle?

Sir Tim. The best woman in all the world: I know her very well; how could I be so stupid not to think of her! Greenwood, do you know where our country neighbour, Sir John Cockle, lodges?

Green. Yes, Sir.

Sir Tim. Don't be out of the way, then; I shall send a letter by you presently, which you must deliver privately into Miss Kitty's own hand. If she comes with you, I shall give you directions where to conduct her, and do you come back here and let me know.

Green. Yes, Sir.—Poor Kitty, is it thus thy falsehood to me is to be punish'd? I will prevent thy ruin; however. [Exit.

Sir Timothy sings.

*O the pleasing, pleasing joys
Which in women we possess!
O the raptures which arise!
They alone have power to bless!
Beauty smiling,
Wit beguiling,
Kindness charming,
Fancy warming,
Kissing, toying,
Melting, dying,
O the raptures which arise!
O the pleasing, pleasing joys!*

Land. You are a merry wag.

Sir Tim. Merry, ay! why what is life without enjoying the pleasures of it? Come, I'll write this letter, and then, honest Bacchus, we'll taste what wine thou hast got.

SCENE IV.

Miss Kitty, and Mrs. Starch.

Miss. But, pray, Mrs. Starch, does all new fashions come up first at court?

Mrs. Starch. O dear, Madam, yes. They do nothing else there but study new fashions. That's what the court is for: and we milliners, and tailors, and barbers, and mantua-makers, go there to learn fashions for the good of the publick.

Miss. But, Madam, was not you saying just now that it was the fashion for the ladies to paint themselves?

Mrs. Starch. Yes.

Miss. Well, that is pure; then one may be as handsome as ever one will, you know. And if it was not for a few freckles, I believe I should be very well; should not I, Mrs. Starch?

Mrs. Starch. Indeed, Madam, you are very handsome.

Miss. Nay, don't flatter me now; do you really think I am handsome?

Mrs. Starch. Upon my word you are. What a shape is there! What a genteel air! What a sparkling eye!

Miss. Indeed! I doubt you flatter me. Not but I have an eye, and can make use of it, too, as well as the best of them, if I please.

S O N G.

*Tho' born in a country town,
The beauties of London unknown,
My heart is as tender,
My waist is as slender,
My skin is as white,
My eyes are as bright
As the best of them all,
That twinkle or sparkle at court or ball.
I can ogle and sigh,
Then frown and be coy;
False sorrow
Now borrow,
And rise in a rage;
Then languish
In anguish,
And softly, and softly engage.*

But, pray, Mrs. Starch, which do you think the most genteel walk now? To trip it away o' this manner; or to swim smoothly along, thus?

Mrs. Starch. They both become you extremely.

Miss. Do they, really? I'm glad you think so, for, indeed, I believe you are a very good judge. And, now I think on't, I'll have your opinion in something else. What do you think it is that makes a fine lady?

Mrs. Starch. Why, Madam, a fine person, fine wit, fine airs, and fine cloaths.

Miss. Well, you have told me already that I'm very handsome, you know, so that's one thing; but as for wit, what's that? I don't know what that is, Mrs. Starch.

Mrs. Starch. O Madam, wit is, as one may say—the—the being very witty; that is, comical, as it were; doing something to make every body laugh.

Miss. O, is that all? Nay, then, I can be as witty as any body, for I am very comical. Well, but what's the next? Fine airs; O, let me alone for fine airs; I have airs enough, if I can but get lovers to practise 'em upon. And then, fine cloaths; why, these are very fine cloaths, I think; don't you think so, Mrs. Starch?

Mrs. Starch. Yes, Madam.

Enter Sir John, observing them.

Miss. And is not this a very pretty cap, too? Does not it become me?

Mrs. Starch. Yes, Madam.

Miss. But don't you think this hoop a little too big?

Sir John. No, no; too big! no. Not above six or seven yards round.

Mrs. Starch. Indeed, Sir, 'tis within the circumference of the mode a great deal.

Sir John. That it may be, but I'm sure it's beyond the circumference of modesty a great deal.

Miss. Lord, papa, can't you dress yourself as you've a mind, and let us alone. How should you know any thing of women's fashions? Come, let us go into the next room.

[Exit Miss, and Mrs. Starch.]

Enter Joe, with Greenwood.

Joe. Sir, here's one that you'll be very glad to see.

Sir John. Who is it?—What, honest Greenwood! May I believe my eyes?

Green. Sir, I am very glad to see you; I hope all your family are well.

Sir John. Very well. But, for Heaven's sake, what has brought thee to London? What's the meaning of this livery? I don't understand thee.

Green. I don't wonder that you are surprized; but I will explain myself. You know the faithful, honest love I bear your daughter, and you are sensible, since the addresses of Sir Timothy Flash, how much her falsehood has grieved me; yet more for her sake, even than my own: my own unhappiness I could endure with patience, but the thoughts of seeing her reduced to shame and misery, I cannot bear.

Sir John. What dost thou mean?

Green. I very much suspect his designs upon her are not honourable.

Sir John. Not honourable! he dare not wrong me so!—But go on.

Green. Immediately after you had left the country, hearing that he was hastening to London after you, and wanted a servant, I went and offer'd myself, resolving, by a strict watch on all his actions, to prevent, if possible, the ruin of her I cannot but love, how ill soever I have been treated. Not knowing me to be his rival, he brought me along with him. We arrived in London yesterday, and I am now sent by him to give your daughter, privately, this letter.

Sir John. What can it tend to? I know not what to think; but if I find he dares to mean me wrong, by this good hand—

Green. Then let me tell ye, he means you villainous wrong. The ruin of your daughter is contrived; I heard the plot; and this very letter is to put it in execution.

Sir John. What shall I do?

Green. Leave all to me. I'll deliver the letter, and, by her behaviour, we shall know better how to take our measures. But how shall I see her?

Sir John. She is in the next room; I'll go in and send her to you.

Green. If you tell her who it is, perhaps she will not be seen.

Sir John. I won't. [Exit.]

Enter Miss Kitty.

Miss. Bless me! is not that Sir Timothy's livery! [Aside.] Pray, Sir, is Sir Timothy Flash come to town?

Green. Yes, Madam.

Miss. Good luck! is it you? What new whim have you got in your head now, pray?

Green. No new whim in my head, but an old one in my heart, which, I am afraid, will not be easily renouv'd.

Miss. Indeed, young man, I'm sorry for it; but you have had my answer already, and I wonder you should trouble me again.

Green. And is it thus you receive me! Is this the reward of all my faithful love?

Miss. Can I help your being in love? I'm sure I don't desire it; I wish you would not teize me with your impertinent love any more.

Green. Why, then, did you encourage it? For, give me leave to say, you once did love me.

Miss. Perhaps I might, when I thought myself but your equal; but now, I think, you cannot in modestly pretend to me any longer.

Green. Vain, foolish girl! for Heaven's sake,

what alteration do you find in yourself for the better? In what, I wonder, does the fine lady differ from the miller's daughter? Have you more wit, more sense, or more virtue, than you had before? Or are you in any thing alter'd from your former self, except in pride, folly, and affectation?

Miss. Sir, let me tell you these are liberties that don't become you at all. Miller's daughter!

Green. Come, come, Kitty, for shame, lay aside these foolish airs of the fine lady; return to yourself, and let me ask you one serious question; do you really think Sir Timothy designs to marry you?

Miss. You are very impertinent to ask me such a question; but to silence your presumption for ever—I'm sure he designs it.

Green. I'm glad she thinks so, however. [Aside.] Nay, then, I do not expect you will resign the flattering prospect of wealth and grandeur, to live in a cottage on a little farm. 'Tis true, I shall be independent of all the world; my farm, however small, will be my own, unmortgaged.

Miss. Psha! can you buy me fine cloaths? Can you keep me a coach? Can you make me a lady? If not, I advise you to go down again to your pitiful farm, and marry somebody suitable to your rank.

S O N G.

Adieu to your cart and your plough;

I scorn to milk your cow.

Your turkeys and geese,

Your butter and cheese,

Are much below me now.

If ever I wed,

I'll hold up my head,

And be a fine lady, I vow.

And so, Sir, your very humble servant.

Green. Nay, Madam, you shall not leave me yet; I have something more to say before we part. Suppose this worthy, honourable knight, instead of marriage, should only have a base design upon your virtue.

Miss. He scorns it: No, he loves me, and I know will marry me.

Green. Dear Kitty, be not deceived; I know he will not.

Miss. You know nothing of the matter.

Green. Read that, and be convinc'd. [She reads.]

My dear angel,

I could no longer stay in the country, when you was not there to make it agreeable. I came to town yesterday; and beg, if possible, you will, this evening, make me happy with your company. I will meet you at a relation's; my servant will conduct you to the house. I am impatient till I throw myself into your arms, and convince you how much I am,

Your fond and passionate admirer,

TIMOTHY FLASH.

Miss. Well, and what is there in this to convince me of his ill intentions?

Green. Enough, I think. If his designs are honourable, why are they not open? Why does he not come to your father's house, and make his proposal? Why are you to be met in the dark at a stranger's?

Miss. Let me see; "I'll meet you at a relation's; my servant will conduct you;" indeed I don't know what to think of that.

Green. I'll tell you, Madam; that pretended relation is a notorious bawd.

Miss. 'Tis false; you have contrived this story to abuse me.

Green. No, Kitty, so well I love you, that, if I thought his designs were just, I could rejoice in your happiness, though at the expense of my own.

Miss. You strangely surprize me; I wish I knew the truth.

Green. To convince you of my truth, here is a direction to the house in his own hand, which he himself gave me, lest I should mistake: Whither, if you still doubt my sincerity, and think proper to go, I am ready to be your conductor.

Miss. And is this the end of all his designs? Have I been courted only to my ruin? My eyes are now too clearly open'd. What have I been doing?

Green. If you are but so convinc'd of your danger, as to avoid it, I am satisfy'd.

Enter Sir John.

Sir John. What do I hear? Are you reconcil'd, then?

Miss. My dear father! I have been cheated and abused.

Sir John. I hope your virtue is untouch'd.

Miss. That I will always preserve.

Sir John. Then I forgive you any thing. But how shall we be reveng'd on this scoundrel knight?

Miss. Contrive but that, and I am easy.

Green. As his base designs have not been executed, I think if we could expose and laugh at him, it would be sufficient punishment.

Sir John. If it could be done severely.

Miss. I think it may. I believe I have found out a way to be reveng'd on him; come with me into the next room, and we'll put it in execution.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, a gentleman desires to speak with you.

Sir John. I'll come to him—Go you together, & ye hear, and contrive your design.

[They go out severally.]

SCENE V.

Sir John, and the King disguis'd as a Collegiate.

Sir John. No compliments, I tell ye, but come to the point: What is your business?

King. As I appear to you in the habit of a collegiate, you may fancy I am some queer pedantic fellow; but I assure you I am a person of some birth, and had a liberal education. I have seen the world, and kept the best company. But living a little too freely, and having spent the greatest part of my fortune on women and wine, I was persuaded by a certain nobleman to take orders, and he would give me a living, which he said was coming into his hands. I was just closing with the proposal when the spiteful incumbent recovered, and I was disappointed.

Sir John. Well, and what's all this to me?

King. Why, Sir, there is a living now fallen, which is in the king's gift, and I hear you have so good an interest with his majesty, that I am persuaded a word from you, in my favour, would be of great service to me.

Sir John. And what must that word be, pray?

King. Nay, that I leave to you.

Sir John. You are in the right; and I'll tell you what it shall be. That you, being a senseless, idle-headed fellow, and having ruin'd yourself by your own folly and extravagance, you therefore think yourself highly qualified to teach mankind their duty. Will that do?

King. You are in jest, Sir,

Sir John. Upon my word, but I am in earnest. I think he that recommends a profligate wretch to the most serious function in life, merely for the sake

of a joke, gives as bad a proof of his morals, as he does of his wit.

King. Sir, I honour your plain dealing. You exactly answer the character I have heard of your uncommon sincerity; and, to let you see that I am capable of something, I have wrote a poem in praise of that virtue, which I beg leave to present to you, and hope you will receive it kindly.

[Gives him the poem.]

Sir John. Sir, I am not us'd to these things: I don't understand 'em at all; but, let's see. *[Sir John reads.]* A poem in praise of the incomparable sincerity and uncommon honesty of the worthy Sir John Cockle, &c.——Enough, enough; a poem in praise of sincerity, with a fulsome compliment in the very title, is extraordinary indeed. Sir, I am oblig'd to you for your kind intentions; your wit and your poetry may be very fine, for aught I know; but a little more common sense, I believe, could do you no harm.

King. He is not to be flatter'd, I find; but I'll try what bribery will do. That, I'm afraid, hits every body's taste. *[Aside.]*——Shall I beg one word more with you? Sir, you are a gentleman of the greatest sincerity and honour I ever met with; and, for that reason, I shall always have the highest regard for you in the world, and for all that belong to you. I hear your daughter is going to be married; let me beg leave to present her with this diamond buckle.

Sir John. Sir, you surprize me very much; pray, what may the value of this be?

King. That's not worth mentioning; about five hundred pounds, I believe.

Sir John. Why, did not you tell me, just now, that you had spent all your fortune?

King. I did so; but it was for a particular reason; and you shall find I am not so poor as I represented myself.

Sir John. I am glad of it. But, pray, how am I to return this extraordinary generosity?

King. I expect no return, Sir, upon my honour. Tho' you have it in your power to oblige me very much.

Sir John. Don't mention the living, for that I have told you already you are not fit for.

King. I won't. But there is a certain place at court of another kind, which I have long had a mind to: 'Tis true there is a sorry insignificant fellow in it at present; but he's of no service; and I know your power with the king; a word or two from you would soon dispossess him.

Sir John. But what must he be dispossest'd for?

King. To make room for me, that's all.

Sir John. Hum——Indeed, it won't do with me—here, take it again; and let me tell you, I am not to be flatter'd into a foolish thing, nor brib'd into a base one.

King. *[Discovering himself.]* Then thou art my friend; and I will keep thee next my heart.

Sir John. And is it your majesty?

King. Be not surpriz'd: It is your own maxim, that a king cannot be too cautious in trying those whom he designs to trust. Forgive this disguise; I have try'd thy honesty, and will no longer suspect it.

Enter Greenwood.

Green. Sir, I am come to let Miss Kitty know privately, that my master will be here disguis'd immediately.

Sir John. Will he? Well, go into the next room and tell her so. If your majesty will be so good as to retire in this chamber a while, you will hear something, perhaps, that will divert you.

Enter Joe.

Joe. Sir, here's a maid-servant come to be hir'd.

Sir John. Let her come in; I'll speak to her presently.

[Exit with the King.]

Enter Sir Timothy, disguis'd as a Maid-Servant.

Sir Tim. Well, I am obliged to the dear girl for this kind contrivance of getting me into the house with her. 'Twill be charmingly convenient—

Re-enter Sir John.

Sir Tim. Sir, I heard that the young lady, your daughter, wanted a servant, and I should be proud of the honour to serve her.

Sir John. My daughter will be here presently. Pray, my dear, what's your name?

Sir Tim. Faith I never thought of that; what shall I say? [Aside.] Betty, Sir.

Sir John. And pray, Mrs. Betty, who did you live with last?

Sir Tim. Pox of his impertinence; he has non-plas'd me again. [Aside.] Sir, I—I—liv'd with Sir Timothy Flash.

Sir John. Ah! a vile fellow that; a very vile fellow, was not he? Did he pay you your wages?

Sir Tim. Yes, Sir. I shall be even with you for this, by-and-by. [Aside.]

Sir John. You was well off, then; for, they say he's what he very seldom does. Sad pay!—I can tell you, one part of your business must be to watch that villain, that he does not debauch my daughter; for I hear he designs it. But I hope we shall prevent him.

Sir Tim. I'll take care of her, Sir, to be sure.—I burst with laughter, to think how charmingly we shall gull the old fellow. [Aside.]

Sir John. Kate!

Enter Miss Kitty.

Here's a maid for you, Kate, if you like her.

Miss. O lord! a maid! why, she's a monster! I never saw so ugly a thing in all my life.

Sir Tim. The cunning jade does this to blind the old fool. [Aside.]

Miss. Pray, child, what can you do?

Sir Tim. I'll do the best I can to please you, Madam, and I don't question but I shall do.

Miss. Indeed you won't do.

Sir Tim. I hope I shall, Madam, if you please to try me.

Miss. No, I durst not try you, indeed.

Sir Tim. Why, Madam?

Miss. Methinks you look like a fool; I hate a fool.

Sir John. Nay, my dear, don't abuse the young woman; upon my word, I think she looks mighty well. Hold up your head, child. O lord! Mrs. Betty, you have got a beard, methinks.

Strokes her under the chin.

Miss. What! has Betty got a beard! Ha, ha, ha! Ah, Betty! why did not you shave closer? But I told ye you was a fool.

Sir John. Well—and what wages do you expect, my dear?

Miss. Ay, what work do you design to do, my dear?

Sir John. How cleverly you have bit the old fool, ha!

Miss. And how charmingly we shall laugh at him by-and-by, ha!

Sir John. Now, don't you think you look like a puppy?

Miss. Poor Sir Timothy! are you disappointed, love? Come, don't nangry, and I'll sing it a song.

S O N G.

I.

Alas, luckless knight! I mourn thy case!

Alas! what hast thou done?

Poor Betty! thou hast lost thy place;

Poor knight! thy sex is gone.

II.

Learn, henceforth, from this disaster,

When for girls you lay your plots,

That each miss expects a master

In breeches, not in petticoats.

Sir John and Miss. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Tim. Zoons! am I to be us'd in this manner? And do you think I will bear it unreveng'd?

Miss. And have you the impudence to think you are not well us'd?

Sir John. Nay, nay, if he's not satisfied; instead of the entertainment he expected, suppose we give him what he deserves. Who's within, there?

Enter three or four Servants; Sir Timothy runs off, and they after him.

Sir John. They'll overtake him; and I don't doubt but they'll give him the discipline he deserves.

Enter King, Greenwood, and Courtiers.

King. After what you have told me, I think they cannot use him too ill. Madam, I wish you joy of your escape from the ruin which threaten'd you.

Miss. The king! I thank your majesty.

King. And I am glad to hear that you are reconcil'd to an honest man that deserves you.

Miss. I see my error, and, I hope, by my future conduct, to make amends for the uneasiness I have given to so good a father.

Sir John. My dear child, I am fully satisfied: and I hope thou wilt be every day more and more convinc'd, that the happiness of a wife does not consist in a title, or fine appearance of her husband, but in the worthiness of his sentiments, and the fondness of his heart.

King. And now, my good old man, henceforth be thou my friend. I will give thee an apartment in my palace, that thou may'st always be near my person. And let me conjure thee ever to preserve this honest, plain sincerity. Speak to me freely, and let me hear the voice of truth. If my people complain, convey their grievances faithfully to my ear; for how should kings redress those ills, which flatterers hide, or wicked men disguise?

Sir John. I thank your majesty for the confidence you have in me: My heart, I know, is honest, and my affection to your majesty sincere: but as to my abilities, alas! they are but small; yet such as they are, if it clash not with my duty to the publick, they shall always be at your majesty's service.

King. I'd have you just to both.

But let your country's good be first your aim: }
On this our honest miller builds his claim, }
At least for pardon; if you please, for fame. }



